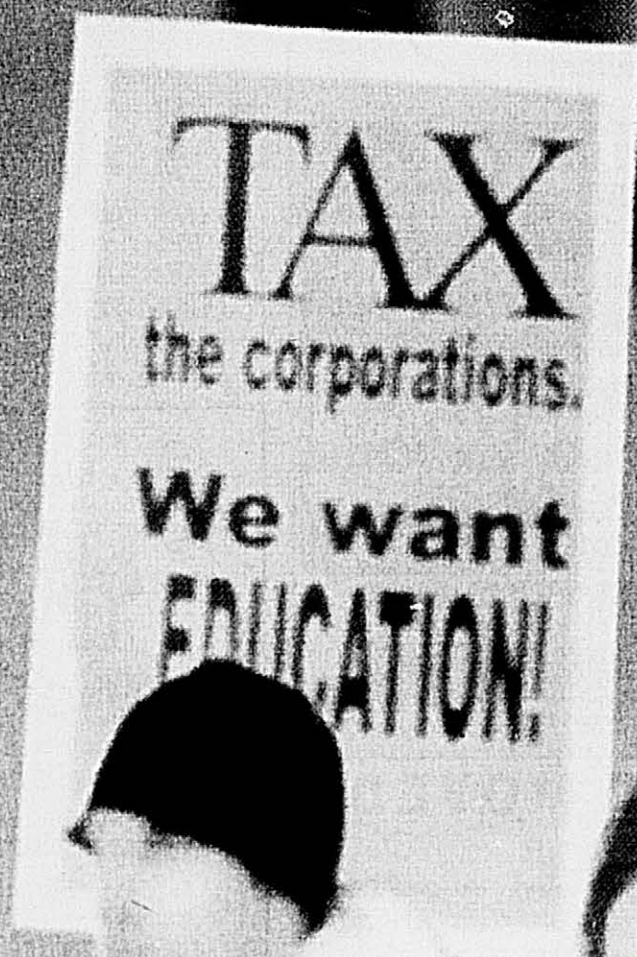


THE MCGILL DAILY

Volume 89, Issue 46 February 3, 2000
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Cross Country Call to Arms

See pg. 8



NEWS –

*McGill aims to increase recruiting
at CEGEPs - pg. 3*

CULTURE –

*Spoken word: Alive and kicking in
Montreal - pg. 12*

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McGill Pushes for More CEGEP and Francophone Students

Critics call open house an effort to curry favour with the provincial government

BY JON BRICKER

In the competitive market to recruit new students, McGill stands to fall behind if it doesn't start tapping Quebec's pool of francophone and CEGEP students, administrators say.

The university will invite Quebec students to an orientation session to be held next Sunday, February 13, says Vice-Principal Academic Luc Vinet.

But some critics call the session an attempt by the university to lower admission standards in order to curry favour with the provincial government, while others wonder whether McGill really cares about admitting Quebec students at all.

"The market for students is becoming more and more competitive," said Vinet. "In the current market, if we stand still, we're likely to fall behind."

"We need to be there looking to attract more people, especially with respect to CEGEP students and Francophone students," he added.

Vinet pointed to a recent effort at other Quebec schools to recruit non-Quebec Canadians and international students, markets in which McGill has typically enjoyed an advantage.

Now, according to Vinet, for McGill to keep bringing in top students and sought-after tuition dollars, McGill has to be inward-looking with its recruitment effort.

He pointed to what he calls administration's target student makeup - 50 per cent Quebecois, and about one quarter

francophone. But last year saw a drop in applications from Quebec students, and while Vinet says McGill still meets its target, more needs to be done.

But Jesse Rickard questions the motives behind the recruitment push and next Sunday's open house. Rickard is part of Students for a Better McGill, a campus group that calls for the elimination of policies like differential tuition and admissions quotas.

"McGill is trying to recruit francophone students who aren't necessarily qualified and standards are continually declining," Rickard said.

He points to the 50 per cent quota, which he says has the university lowering its standards in many cases just to ensure a student body made up significantly of Quebec students.

"The quota is in place to please the provincial government," Rickard explained. "The education minister is

Vinet denied the claim that the administration's effort is trying to curry favour with the PQ government, though he acknowledged that the government would likely look well on a sustained effort to open McGill to Quebec students.

"It would help McGill, I hope, with respect to its relations with the government," Vinet admitted.

But he said that any new recruitment effort could not come without a recognition of McGill's role in Quebec's political atmosphere.

"We cannot be a great international university if we are not deeply rooted and recognized to be great in the community that we are in...We need to be fully involved in Quebec and this involves Quebec students coming to McGill."

Earlier this year, a university discussion paper addressed to the education minister boasted of McGill's current 20 per cent francophone makeup and 50 per cent Quebecois makeup. Vinet

admitted that much of the document sought to tell the ministry what it wanted.

"Why do you have to admit students just to meet a quota?" Rickard asked. "It needs to be made an institution where anyone from anywhere can apply and have an equal chance of getting in."

Plans for the open house were no bet-

"The education minister is telling McGill 'Listen, you want more money, you've got to privilege francophone students.'"

doesn't expect many to go.

"They are spending a lot of energy on this open house, but it's on a Sunday afternoon...Most students won't go to get the information."

"There's this perception [on McGill's part] that

ter received at many CEGEPs.

"We're not McGill's target audience," said Patty Chiara, an academic advisor at Dawson College. "I don't think McGill really cares much if more CEGEP students go there."

"What McGill does is market itself to the US, to the rest of Canada, and internationally."

Chiara says she just learned of McGill's plans to cancel its annual in-house sessions at many CEGEPs, and while she's encouraging students to attend the orientation at McGill, she

"we don't have to go after students in Quebec," Chiara said, adding that the university views local students as a captive market that will choose whether or not to attend McGill, no matter how much information the university makes available. "Concordia does a much better job."

"We are keen on maintaining a sizeable fraction of our student body from Quebec," rebutted Vinet. "We also have to look at francophone students that do not naturally think of McGill."

"We need to be there looking to attract more people, especially with respect to CEGEP students and francophone students."

telling McGill 'Listen, you want more money, you've got to privilege francophone students.'

He says the playing up of events like next weekend's open house, for which high-priced ads were placed in major Montreal papers, carries an ulterior motive.

Black History Month Issue

February 10

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Frustrated UQAM Principal Resigns

Principal Leduc hopes resignation tells government that "the situation is urgent"

BY ISABELLE GAGNÉ

The resignation of UQAM Principal Paule Leduc last Tuesday didn't surprise anyone.

She had hinted at a premature departure several months before, explaining that she was frustrated by the lack of stability at the university and by its unfavorable financial situation.

Leduc tendered her resignation the same day that the Université de Québec à Montréal's administrative council voted 8-5 to cut an additional \$2.5-million from the university's budget, bringing its deficit to a more manageable \$19.5-million.

She also leaves just as PQ Education Minister François Legault is preparing to unveil new government policies for post-secondary education. Leduc hopes her resignation will be another signal to the provincial government that "the situation is urgent."

The "situation" is that UQAM receives 25 per cent less provincial funding per student compared to Quebec's other universities, according to a press release from the university.

"Either [UQAM] receives the necessary funds to guarantee its development and the university community reconsiders in

depth its functioning and the organization of its teaching, or the university suffers immediately," the statement said.

INTERNAL OPPOSITION

Leduc admits that the wave of negotiations between universities and cold beverage companies affected her. The negotiations were strongly denounced by students and professors and seized upon by the media. Internal opposition at UQAM led to the cancellation on January 12 of the university's cold beverage exclusivity contract with Coca-Cola.

Budget constraints and the under-financing of UQAM, which Leduc didn't stop denouncing from the outset of her mandate, were just the tip of the iceberg. "Internal opposition toward the necessary changes" drove the situation "to the limit of what's acceptable," Leduc said.

Police intervention during a protest organized by students and professors to oppose privatization of the university and the Coke contract was probably the catalyst of the whole affair. During the chaos, the police arrested a handful of students while the administration closed the university's doors to prevent students from taking refuge.

It amounted to throwing UQAM to

the lions. Three sociology professors openly demanded Leduc's resignation in an open letter published in the media. One of the professors, Michel Reitag, criticized not only the police intervention, but also the closing of the doors, calling it "unacceptable."

"The person who represents the university...has the primary responsibility of not handing over members of the university like [Leduc] did," Reitag said.

Freitag's colleague, Jean-Guy Lacroix, called the closed doors "intolerable."

According to Lacroix, UQAM's reply to the open letter forgot to mention that the cola exclusivity deal was opposed by "every group at the university, with the exception of the administrators' union which numbers only a few hundred members."

Roland Côté, president of the UQAM employees' union, said, "The principal resigned under the circumstances of a quasi-scandal."

"SHE LISTENS LIKE A MINISTER"

The employees' collective bargaining agreement, which fell through in June

1999, is also a contentious issue. Principal Leduc insisted on the fact that UQAM professors were better off than at other universities, especially when it came to sabbaticals, tax relief, and salaries.

"She lies shamelessly and on so many

LIFE AFTER LEDUC

The principal who "never knew what a university was," according to Freitag, left UQAM at a crossroads — an unsigned collective bargaining agreement and a big deficit.

"UQAM is a sinking ship that has lost its course," said Côté, the union president.

"The

rumour mill is moving quickly," said Lacroix, but no candidate has been nominated as Leduc's successor.

Maxime Venne, a sociology student who was arrested at the demonstration last November, is still waiting for her trial. "All I can hope for is that the next principal doesn't think he has all the power," he said.

Leduc clearly said in her letter of resignation that she would stay in office until a new administration took over, and at the latest, until September 1, 2000. Her mandate would have lasted until the end of May 2001.

“UQAM is a sinking ship that has lost its course.”

levels too!" said Lacroix. "With a \$120,000 salary and her team, she is in a poor position to criticize salaries and sabbaticals."

Lacroix said that Leduc was close to Education Minister François Legault and was known to Premier Lucien Bouchard. He feared Leduc's resignation was "intended to sabotage the collective bargaining agreement."

Lacroix wondered if the PQ government and the administration were using the circumstances to put the university under supervision. "If the stupidity had an end, we wouldn't be where we are now," he said. "Just to let you know, I'm not a Liberal," he added.

Black Activist Speaks at McGill

BY ANDREW GOLDSTEIN

Black History Month kicked off at McGill on Tuesday as the St James Literary Society played host to outspoken black activist, pastor, and former US senator Reverend Darryl Gray. His lecture, entitled "The New Millennium: Blacks in Quebec Society" reflected on the history of black awareness in Canadian society, and the contributions that African Americans have made, and continue to make to society in Quebec.

"In the days when I went to school, there was no mention of black contributions to society or their partaking in society," he told the crowd.

"The African Americans in history textbooks were considered slaves, or as rebelling against slavery. There was no mention of their other roles and contributions."

Whereas forty years ago Malcolm X was advocating achieving black success 'by any means necessary,' Reverend Darryl Gray's approach symbolizes the form that the African American struggle will take in the twenty-first century. That approach demands an attempt at further economic integration.

"To achieve a sense of empowerment, we must continue to be part of the Canadian economic environment," Gray



Reverend Gray at the Faculty Club

said. "Economic institutions, banks and brokerage firms, show an unbalanced number of black people in senior management."

And according to Gray, the twenty-first century poses new challenges.

"The second step that we must take in reacting to the millennium, after celebrating our milestones and achievements, is to focus on the increasing economic impact of the black community," he said

Indeed, the twenty-first century will pose new challenges for the African Americans of Canada but Reverend Gray, for one, is optimistic. It is through education and economic advancements, he says, African Americans will secure an even firmer part in society and help to further break down the walls of discrimination. "Being black is not an excuse to fail, it is a reason to succeed."

Call for Submissions

Women's Issue
March 6

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(B-03 Shatner) and talk to Jaime.

THE MCGILL DAILY

McGill Tribune Accused of Racism

SSMU publication distributes cartoon using racial slurs, sexist imagery

BY JAIME KIRZNER-ROBERTS

A recent poster campaign launched by the McGill Tribune is racist, sexist and offensive, charge angered students.

The poster, meant to solicit Valentine's classifieds, features a cartoon depicting a group of white male animals trying to impress a gang of females. When the males realize that they are being upstaged by a sharply dressed black crow in the cartoon's final still, they look on, muttering comments like, "dum (sic) chicks" and "easily impressed by spades." A "spade" is a derogatory word for a black person.

"The poster is disturbing," said Akin Alaga, political coordinator of McGill's Black Students' Network. "It has definite

racial implications, as well as sexist ones."

"Clearly there is nobody with any racial sensitivity working at the Tribune," Alaga said. "As far as I know, the Tribune has done nothing traditionally to honour black history month, and this whole issue questions how they stand on black issues."

Particularly disturbing to angered students was the fact that nobody involved in the poster campaign, from the cartoonist, to the layout designers, to the SSMU that put its stamp of approval on the posters, to those who posted the posters campuswide and throughout the McGill ghetto tried to stop the posters from being distributed.

By the time students began complain-

ing about the posters, SSMU executives were in damage-control mode. They were quick to apologize for the actions of the front desk staff in approving the flyers. Although the staff have been trained in racial sensitivity issues, executives called their actions a "misunderstanding."

SSMU Vice-President Wojtek Baraniak was quick to point out that the Tribune, which is the official newspaper of the SSMU, is completely autonomous from the Society, and that "in no way were the council, employees or executives involved in the

printing of these posters."

"It was extremely irresponsible to distribute these posters," said Baraniak. "But to tell the truth I don't think [the Tribune staff] knew what they were putting up. This poster must have been a slip up in their screening process."

Paul Conner, editor-in-chief of the Tribune, denied claims that the Tribune staff had any racist intentions in putting up the posters.

"Neither I nor anyone else putting up the posters thought anything of them," he

said. "If there was any misunderstanding, it was certainly not intended."

"We just thought that the character looked physically like a spade," explained Conner. "We did not look at it as something potentially racist. If this is something which concerns students, we would be happy to take down the posters."

The SSMU will formally apologize to its clubs for its error this week, and Conner will explain himself before the Black Students' Network today.

news-briefs



GMO PROTOCOL SIGNED

At last weekend's talks in Montreal, more than 130 countries agreed to an international protocol regulating trade in genetically modified seeds and crops.

Named the Cartagena Protocol, after the Colombian city where negotiations broke off a year ago, the new agreement requires countries to inform others when they approve a new bio-engineered seed or crop for domestic use. The protocol also allows countries to restrict imports of genetically modified organisms even if the scientific evidence concerning their danger is uncertain.

The principal sticking point of the negotiations was whether exporter countries would be required to label foods containing GM products. The US and Canada argued against this, saying it would be impractical for large shipments of mixed origins.

— Tyler Hargreaves

EX-PROFESSOR DENIES SELLING GRADES

TORONTO (CUP) - A former college professor has testified in court that he did not offer to sell A+ grades to his students.

Omar Kefeli, a former part-time math teacher at Centennial College in Toronto, told a courtroom recently that he was only setting up private tutoring lessons for stu-

dent Sebastiano Caschetto.

Caschetto is one of two students who have accused Kefeli of trying to sell high grades in exchange for a camera and cash. The Crown's case is centred around the testimony of the two students and a tape recording Caschetto made in the summer of 1998 while driving Kefeli to the Scarborough Town Centre.

The tape starts off with Caschetto talking with his friends in class. His voice is the first one heard.

"There's always a way to beat the system," Caschetto is heard saying on the tape.

Later in the tape, Kefeli is heard saying, "So, have you thought about our deal?"

"The deal," however, is never discussed in detail. There is some discussion about the price of "the deal" but no mention of money being given in exchange for grades.

After Caschetto and Kefeli agree on a price, it is Caschetto who says, "But I have a better idea, why don't you bring me a blank copy of the exam, I'll fill it out and bring it to the exam."

Most of the tape is inaudible. Caschetto, however, testified that Kefeli promised an A+ grade in exchange for \$1,000. Jose Costello, the second student in the case, told the court that the math professor wanted a Polaroid camera.

The former math teacher was eventually charged with two counts of offering a secret commission, which carries a five-year maximum sentence if convicted.

Kefeli was called in to teach an abbreviated version of a compulsory math course in the Tool-and-Die-Maker program, after students complained about the previous professor.

Court recessed until February 23 when the Crown and defense will give their closing arguments.

— Mathieu B. Yuill

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McGill Tribune ads use derogatory language, offend students.

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Slibel & Lander

Oh no!
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Your forum for all the latest campus scoops

Slibel hears rumours there's a serious case of nepotism going down at the cafeteria in the education building. The SSMU-created contract allegedly does a **slipshod job of guaranteeing job security**, thus allowing a high muckdymuck to start scaling back on the current employees' hours so that he can bring in **family members... Wojtek Baraniak**, everybody's favourite smileybear, had a small crisis of identity at yesterday's rally. Upon being handed a sign which proclaimed "No corporate funding! More Public Funding!" with the McGill name emblazoned on a Coca-Cola bottle, the SSMU exec politely declined and chose a more benign "Invest Federal Surplus in Education" poster.... Quebec Premier **Lucien Bouchard** paid a visit to campus last week for a high level meet-greet-n'-eat with **Bernie and Co.** Word has it that the gang went to **Ruby Foo's**, but of course we are legally bound to make a Ruby Foo's reference at every possible juncture.... Slibel hears that **SSMU** will pull out a secret motion at their emergency meeting tomorrow to hold a referendum on the **Cold Beverage Agreement**. But wait, you ask.

Isn't there already a CBA referendum in the works? Well, yes. Slibel hears that this is a plan to confuse the already tiny percentage of students who vote and throw the whole issue to the J-board long enough to sell everything that's not nailed down to a Giant Soul-Destroying Corporation.... In other news, Slibel hears that **John Cleghorn** is not a happy camper. Aww, cheer up Johnny! Things aren't as bad as they seem! We still love you!... **Lloyd Axworthy**, the Liberal diplomat extraordinaire from Winnipeg, was seen out and about soon after his speech to the McGill Model UN last week. Slibel could have sworn that it saw the big man gorging himself at the all-you-can-eat Maharaja Buffet. Perhaps he was acclimating for a diplomatic mission to fix that whole **India-Pakistan arms race** thing?

Got any gossip that simply shouldn't be kept secret? Of course you do! Email Slibel at slibel_landar@hotmail.com. We guarantee your anonymity, and your news will be reported in the first section SSMUers read in their favourite campus newspaper.

from the archives

20 years ago: UFO-logist Stanton Friedman lectured at McGill on the subject of flying saucers, The Daily reported. Friedman cited US-government cover-ups of UFO sightings, pointing to a case in New Mexico where he thought the government had collected debris from an extra-terrestrial spacecraft. He also asked the audience how many of them had seen a UFO. Out of a crowd of 600, 38 said they had seen a UFO.

Also in the news, students at the University of Toronto indicated their support for Pierre Trudeau's Liberal

Party in the upcoming federal election. In a poll conducted by The Varsity, U of T's student newspaper, 37.4 per cent of students said they would vote Liberal, while 21.4 per cent supported the NDP and 19.2 per cent would vote Conservative.

40 years ago: Over 200 people were executed by Hungarian government officials, including 150 teenagers, The Daily reported. The executions were punishment for the teenagers' involvement in the 1956 Hungarian Revolt against the country's Communist government. The government held the teens for four years until they all reached the age of 21, the minimum age at which the government could legally put them to death.

McGill debaters swept a team from Carleton University to advance to the semifinals of Canada's Inter-University Debating League. At Carleton in Ottawa, Irwin Cotler and J. J. Elkin successfully argued that the Canadian government

should take steps to curb the growing power of labour unions in Canada. Meanwhile at home, McGill debaters Les Malcovitch and Gordon Echenberg won in opposition to the resolution.

60 years ago: The Canadian government announced that it had positions available in the army for "men of the engineer-physicist type," The Daily reported.

An editorial in The Daily suggested that women should not be admitted to the exclusive discussions of McGill's Political Economy Club. The editorial recommended that despite an increased proportion of female students in economics and political science, the tradition of a men-only club "should not be lightly broken." Women, the editorial said, could form their own organization.

In other World War II news, the British government expropriated all ships and shipyards in Britain, while France launched its first offensive since January 20 - a period of 10 days.

Unity and Idealism



BY RAYMOND AXAS

I had the opportunity last week to attend conferences given by two well known political personalities.

On Tuesday, Claude Ryan was at the McGill University Chapel to give a sermon on the unification of the Church for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The next day Minister Stéphane Dion gave a talk at the Centre Communautaire Boisd-Boulogne concerning the unity of Canada. Some students will recall that Minister Dion also recently debated this very subject with deputy Daniel Turp at McGill.

What a coincidence that both speak of unity in what are clearly unrelated subjects. Church and state are trying to convince people, through speech and sermon, that the only way each can survive is by fostering a sense of unity. In a country where the people distinguish themselves by their individualism, this talk of unity is a strange discourse! What a foreign concept!

And yet society is growing to a point where it is becoming necessary to wake up to this reality; we need each other to sur-

vive and succeed. Unity is needed for the country to stay in one piece. It is also necessary for the Church to survive as one in order to give the same message to all its people.

The movers and thinkers of today are visiting many different communities to spread this message, but what are the foreseeable results? How will French Canadians embrace their countrymen when they are a minority surrounded by a sea of Anglophone Americans and Canadians? How will the churches reconcile their differences when they can't make concessions on certain fundamental issues and questions of dogma? For many, these seem like futile battles.

Nay, the fight for unity is not lost in advance. Here is why: the two Quebecois men, Ryan and Dion, have an ideal in mind, and they are pursuing their goal because they find beauty in it.

There is something profound in their search for unity, something almost mystical. This search for unity transpires from a collective search for wholeness. Society is looking for a sort of communion with itself. It is a reaction to the nuclear family, to the fractured communities we live in, to the angst created by division and the loneliness caused by keeping our "vital space."

These two men, through their efforts in their respective fields, are simply collecting the wild horses. Through their efforts they will one day gather a splendid herd.

Submit your Hyde Parks to the Daily office, or to mcgilldaily@hotmail.com.

CLARIFICATION

The Judicial Board of the Students' Society of McGill University was not involved in the negotiation of the settlement reached between the SSMU and Paulk Flicker, the chief returning officer of SSMU. The J-Board dismissed the case when SSMU withdrew its petition.

Incorrect information appeared in The Daily on January 31.

WRITE FOR

THE MCGILL DAILY

NEWS:

MONDAY 4:00 TO 6:00PM

CULTURE:

FRIDAY 3:30 PM

PHOTOGRAPHY:

MONDAY 5:00PM

EVERYONE WELCOME!

ALL MEETINGS IN SHATNER B-03

APATHY RALLY by Channing Rodman





OUTRAGE OVER POUTINE COVERAGE

I found Judah Strawczynski's biased and overbearing comments on the poutine situation in Montreal reprehensible ("Fries + Gravy + Cheese = Heaven," January 31).

First of all, it is common knowledge that La Belle Province serves the best poutine in Quebec outside of the Casse-Croutes found on Highway 117, north of St. Jerome - trust me, I've done the research.

Another appalling and hurtful revelation in Mr. Strawczynski's article was the grouping of alterno-poutine into one category. Being a poutine fundamentalist, I recognize the blasphemy of serving poutine with vegetables. However, the merit of "Poutine à la Ben's" (poutine with smoked meat, as served at Ben's Deli) is unquestionable.

Furthermore, the comments made as to McGill accepting a poutine exclusivity deal from the International Poutine Federation is a tremendous idea. What better way to raise funds for the fledgling libraries than to endorse poutine as the only food served throughout McGill?

In fact, the embracing of poutine should be a top priority at McGill. Let me be the first to suggest that Fernand Lachance, inventor of poutine, be considered for an honorary degree. Hell, if Senate rejects the idea, The Daily would at least get another exclusive and a chance to disgrace the French consulate.

In conclusion, poutine's merits could be a solution to funding throughout Canadian institutions. By privatizing McGill's poutine distribution and charging exorbitant rates as they do in the US, we could ensure that only the wealthy have the opportunity to eat poutine. It would also guarantee the highest quality poutine possible.

As a final note, poutine may even be the solution to national unity. If Lucien and Jean sat down to a hot bowl of curds-and-gravy-soaked fries in Chicoutimi, perhaps Canada could be saved. Why not?

Alex Singer
U1 Science

Have you got something to say? Concerns about life, the universe, kitty cats, and everything? Do you want to respond to something written The Daily? Have you got a beef with us? Think we're cool?

If so, The Daily accepts letters under 300 words and Hyde Parks under 500 words for publication on our Commentary pages.

Submit to The Daily office in Shatner B-03 or by email to mcgill-daily@hotmail.com. Submissions may be edited for length, clarity, and possible libellous or offensive content.

THE MCGILL DAILY

QUESTIONS NEED TO BE ASKED

Public or private? What kind of institution should McGill be?

This is the question we need to begin not only asking ourselves but answering as well - sooner rather than later, before the situation gets any worse. We need to consider each option seriously instead of outright rejection.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of a public institution? One obvious disadvantage is funding which the university has no control over. If we decide to accept McGill as a public institution, then we need to consider how this obstacle of underfunding can be overcome.

Is it a realistic objective to obtain adequate funding from the government and still maintain McGill's standards? This is not entirely unattainable. Some groups such as nurses and truck workers have shown that they can mobilize effectively and draw media attention to their concerns. Consequently, the government feels forced to give in. However, can students mobilize as effectively as these groups? Are they prepared to do so?

Needless to say, we all know that everything involves trade-offs. Whether we choose McGill as a public or private institution, there will be some concessions. We need to balance these trade-offs and decide soon which option is better suited for McGill's needs.

We not only need to start thinking of these questions but answering them concretely as well. The reason for answering them now is that we still have a say in the process.

Later down the road, a change or transition may be imposed without us having any say. If we consider these issues now and choose a particular option, we can make that change on our own terms; and if not on our own terms, then at least some of our concerns will be addressed.

Public or private? Discuss and decide.

Nick Kerrigan

TRIBUNE OFFENSIVE, RACIST, SEXIST

It seems that racism and sexism are alive and well at McGill and, even better, on an ad approved for posting by the McGill Tribune and the SSMU front desk.

A cartoon featured on a Tribune flyer for Valentine's Day was posted throughout campus and in the Ghetto. Offensive on so many levels, I am in shock that this went completely unnoticed until now. What era are we living in when this sort of blatant bias is acceptable or even funny?

Racism? Is that the new Valentine's Day sentiment? I suppose I was naive in thinking that we had left this behind. I understand that political correctness is no longer in vogue, but I cannot believe that people are this blind.

Don't tell me that I'm being overly sensitive in speaking out about this. Having experienced both formal and informal racism, I refuse to stay silent. It angers me that people are still so ignorant today as not to recognize bigotry staring them in the face.

It's a thing alright. Let's laugh it up because those crazy white guys in the ad

are getting showed up yet again by the cool black guy. Oh, those whorish white girls, they'll do anything for miscegenation.

Thank you Tribune, for perpetuating another racial stereotype. Thank you for approving racial slurs and circulating them throughout the McGill community. Thank you for making me feel uncomfortable in my own skin.

When editors are afraid to comment and executives are scrambling to distance themselves, I really start to wonder how liberal and enlightened our university really is. And that makes me even more angry.

Fuck you Tribune for making me feel alienated at my own university.

Le'Nise Brothers
U2 Political Science

THE TISCHER'S WEAK LOGIC

It is not The Daily's editorial board but rather SSMU President Andrew Tischler who is guilty of weak logic. This much is evident from Tischler's letter to the editor ("Some Things Better Left Unsaid," January 27).

Concerning The Daily's decision to print the Cleghorn matter, Tischler compares it to "distributing arsenic through the water system." Tischler's analogy comparing the free flow of information to the spreading of poison is staggering, especially as it comes from the person who is supposed to represent McGill students.

Tischler's attitude toward the student population is clearly one of contempt. He accuses The Daily of worsening conditions for students by printing information that could damage the credibility of McGill. His position is classically anti-democratic: it is the elite who know what's best for the population-at-large, who must therefore be ruled over "in their best interests."

I counter that students are intelligent and are best served by being well informed about the situation at their university. If students are aware, they can ensure that policies are enacted in their best interests and not only the interests of the McGill administration and student government.

The breaking of a trust occurs whenever the McGill administration doesn't act in the best interests of its students. If a senator believes that this is happening and decides to reveal the contents of a confidential meeting, The Daily has every right to print it. We do not want to be ruled by a benevolent despot, however brilliant. The SSMU president derives his legitimacy from the student population and it's time he gave them a little more respect.

Nick Vikander
U1 Science

BARANIAK'S FALLACIES

While taking the time to point out the fallacies in François Tanguay-Renaud's argument, Wojtek Baraniak has failed to notice that he commits errors of the same magnitude ("Baraniak v. Tanguay-Renaud Cont'd," January 31).

I find the problem with his response twofold. First are the aforementioned

errors, and second is the arrogance with which Mr. Baraniak addresses his issues.

With no disrespect to Mr. Baraniak, I believe that the arrogance in his comments about people denying Canada having a federal system are asinine and are examples of the general student population's contempt toward SSMU. Is it necessary to berate students or student leaders who try to voice an opinion contrary to the dictated belief of the SSMU?

In terms of fallacies, Mr. Baraniak commits many. Firstly, he states that every race for VP external since 1995 has seen CASA membership as the primary issue.

This point is debatable. I'm sure that many other issues were discussed, including in Mr. Baraniak's own campaign, where he received many votes based on a ghetto garage sale and the creation of a safety commissioner, both ideas that are of more importance to the average voter than joining CASA.

I'm sure that if a plebiscite were held only about 25 per cent of students would even know what CASA was.

Mr. Baraniak's second error is that he states the 1994-95 SSMU election was fought exclusively on CASA membership, and that the candidate who endorsed CASA won by a significant margin. Mr. Baraniak presupposes from this that voters were casting their votes based on the issue of CASA, and not the various other factors that affect voter preferences.

In fact, like many SSMU elections, chances are it was more of a popularity contest than an issue-based vote.

Thus I am in disagreement that, "for the last several years the students at McGill have consistently placed students who support CASA into office." Instead, students have put students into office who also support CASA.

The third error that Mr. Baraniak makes is that he tells Mr. Tanguay-Renaud to "stop second-guessing the will of McGill undergraduate students."

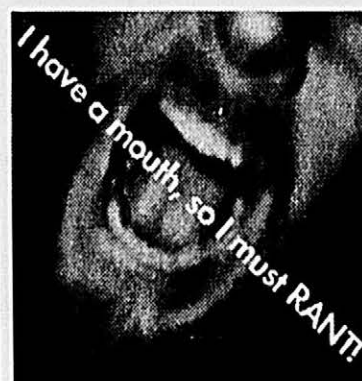
Two problems arise here. One, Mr. Tanguay-Renaud represents the Faculty of Law. Does Mr. Baraniak know something about the wishes of law students that Mr. Tanguay-Renaud doesn't? Secondly, if the will of the students is really behind CASA, then why don't we have another referendum? The last referendum was taken when current fourth-year students were in first year. Preferences do change over the course of time.

Having said that, it is unlikely that a referendum will reflect the real preferences of students because traditionally at McGill a "No" committee is never formed, at least not with the support of any SSMU councilors, as they are discouraged from straying from the SSMU line. Thus most people vote yes or don't care. Maybe Mr. Baraniak can tell us about the last time a referendum failed at McGill.

Let's hope that the SSMU and its officers become more in touch with the students in the future and help alleviate the negative stereotypes that currently exist.

Jaime Slein
U3 Political Science

The Daily accepts letters on its Commentary pages. Send correspondence to mcgilldaily@hotmail.com.



UNCLE CAM

Certify
My Ass

If you don't sleep enough, shit gets random.

The other day I was walking to work when I noticed a moving truck.

This in itself wasn't odd.

But the ISO certification sign on the truck was.

Back in the day, I worked three summers as a mover. In fact, I was contract labour for the very company that is now certified by the International Standards Organization. Now, this company, who will remain nameless, does fine work. They provide workers with wonderful T-shirts, they require you shave before work, etc.

But they are a moving company.

As I understand it, ISO certification is a sign that you have a set of procedures you follow to get the same end result. It also means these procedures are well documented, written down, and tucked away in three-ring binders. Usually this means that people who were productive now screw around with paperwork that explains their jobs.

The concept of an ISO-certified moving company confuses me. Here's how it would go: take owners' objects, crush objects into box, haphazardly tape box closed, take box to truck, smack box off wall, crush box with furniture, sit on box during break.

This makes me believe that I can get ISO certification. The alarm goes off, I stumble out of bed, walk into dresser, stumble over a cat, go to the john, shave, shower, dry myself, stumble to the kitchen, trip over another cat (there are six, so take your pick), yell at cat, realize cats are hungry, apologize to cats, feed cats, make coffee, make lunch, make breakfast, wake Mrs. Uncle Cam, etc. . .

I think I would like the certification tattooed on my ass.

In a completely unrelated thought, I was watching the Golden Globes, produced by Mr. Dick Clark (the eternal teenager™). I marveled at how smoothly it went. No one was forced to cut his or her speech. No one talked too long. And the show ended EXACTLY on time.

It led me to think that a benign dictatorship run by Mr. Dick Clark would be kinda all right. Everyone would be happy, there would be dances all the time, and as a bonus, our anthem would have a hip beat, and you would be able to bug out to it.

Uncle Cam appears every other Thursday in The Daily. Zachsky will return on Monday.



photos by Brie O'Keefe

Students Want Government's Money

Impressive McGill turnout credited for successful CFS rally

By SAMIRA RAHMANI AND SIMON RABINOVITCH

"We want education, tax the corporations." The chants rang through the downtown core yesterday as frustrated students took to Montreal streets, joining thousands more on campuses across the country. They braved the frigid winter weather to make their voices heard in the hope that the federal government would hear their demands for increased public funding of post-secondary education.

The nationwide Day of Action, organized by the Canadian Federation of Students, marked the centrepiece of the student front's Access 2000 campaign. Yesterday, CFS leaders called on federal Finance Minister Paul Martin to restore almost \$4-billion in transfer payments in his forthcoming budget and earmark the money for post-secondary education.

Nearly 200 McGill students came out to support the rally and march, a huge success by most accounts. Many credited the Post-Graduate Students' Society and their extensive cross-campus promotion of the event for the strong showing.

"It was the best turnout in a few years. I think it was because a lot of people with the grassroots organizations around McGill did a really good job in publicizing the rally and getting a lot of people excited

about it," remarked Phil Ilijevsky, Coordinator for the CFS Quebec. In November, a CFS-Q rally in much warmer weather, had a much smaller McGill turnout.

Yesterday's rally was also the first of its sort in years supported by the SSMU, who doesn't hold membership in CASA. According to VP Community and Government Affairs Wojtek Baraniak, SSMU endorsed the campaign this time around because it targeted restoring funding to education.

"It's a cause that everyone can get behind. Reinvestment in education is something that we've always believed in and lobbied strongly for," he said, adding that he was pleased with the McGill turnout.

"It's a sign of the times that McGill students are realizing funding cuts do affect their education directly and that they should start paying attention."

Many marchers also linked concerns with corporatization of campus to massive education cutbacks that have taken place in recent years. They said recent developments in cold beverage agreement talks and discussion of McGill College International made clear that the threat

of privatization is real.

"This is the first time I've come out for McGill and it was mostly the privatization issue that affected me directly. I think it represents a decline in our standards of education," said Hillary Vipond, a U1 philosophy student.

Kate Meier, External Affairs and Governmental Relations Coordinator for the PGSS, is also concerned with the growing corporate handle on McGill. "It's not just student debt load that's the problem — our library collections are becoming increasingly behind the times. There's talk about making private colleges at McGill, seeking corporate deals to get money. We're resorting to these things because the university isn't being properly funded."

The protest, which began at the Roddick Gates moved to pick up other supporters at Concordia where organizers gave speeches and handed out sandwiches to marchers. Students from UQAM also joined bringing the total number of participants to a largely peaceful 500 plus — a remarkable turnout, organizers said, given -30 degree windchill temperatures. The protest wound its way through downtown Montreal for over an hour, culminating near Berri Square.

According to the CFS, more than \$7 billion has been slashed from post-secondary funding over the past five years by the federal Liberals. Rising tuition fees, larger class sizes, crippled library systems and a general decline in academic services, they say, have become pressing problems at universities suffering from the cutbacks. Rally organizers highlighted their goals for the elimination of education-related user fees and the reduction of student debt loads.

And with the federal budget just weeks away, the CFS is demanding that a big cut of the \$12 billion surplus Paul Martin has forecasted go to universities.

Ilijevsky believes that students across the



country sent a message yesterday to Canadians.

"This protest was part of a year-long campaign to convince the public that full funding should be restored in education. That victory is already won," Ilijevsky said. "The public is convinced that full funding for education and health care is more important than tax cuts."

Although no one can know for certain what effect the day of action will have, protesters were optimistic that they were helping to better their predicament. At the very least, they believed that they were providing an opportunity for Canadian students to express their views.

"I think it's very important that students make their feelings on the subject known because it's our education and the next generation's education," agreed Aaron Windsor, Chairperson for the PGSS. "We have to be on record for standing up and fighting for what we want. We want to improve our situation because, if we don't, who is going to take us seriously?"

Other participants, like U1 arts student Jeff Wilson, think that yesterday's rally was only a start and that more must be done to influence the decision makers in Ottawa.

"We definitely got noticed," said Wilson. "But, there has to be more public involvement, more protests, more signs of unrest. This one protest is not enough."



Thousands of Students Protest Education Cuts

BY CUP STAFF

Thousands of students across Canada, took to the streets yesterday as part of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Access 2000 campaign.

Students in more than 50 communities joined the CFS in their call for more education funding.

In St. John's, Newfoundland, 1,500 university, college and high school students walked out of classes to protest government cutbacks to education. The protest was so boisterous that at one point a reporter from a local radio station asked if there was a party going on.

In Charlottetown, more than 200 students at the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) participated in a Kraft dinner lunch. The gathering was meant to highlight the impact high student debt

loads have on students.

In Ottawa, protest organizers estimated that between 2,000-3,000 university and high school students, as well as faculty, marched downtown before reaching Parliament Hill.

CFS national campaigns co-ordinator Pam Frache was very pleased with the turnout.

"I think today shows what we know already: that the majority of Canadians are with us in the fight for a restoration of education funding," she said.

On Parliament Hill, a number of people addressed the crowd — including Federal New Democratic Party Leader Alexa McDonough, prompting the federal government to use their budget surplus to reinvest in social programs.

"If the Liberals have the guts, we have the solution!" said McDonough. "Let's reduce

tuition fees! Let's phase out tuition fees!"

According to Statistics Canada, tuition fees across the country for undergraduate arts programs have increased by 125.9 per cent since 1990, resulting in an average cost of \$3,658.

In Toronto, student protestors blocked entrances to York University. Protestors held cars for three minutes while they marched and let drivers know what was going on. Afterwards, they would let two cars in at a time.

The Toronto Transit Commission decided not to send their buses onto campus and were dropping students off at the perimeter of York.

In downtown Toronto, an estimated 2,000-3,000 students and supporters swarmed Queen's Park in an impressive wave.

"I've jumped through hoops long enough," Joel Harden, the Ontario CFS chair, told the crowd. "Today we're taking a different route. Today you have to listen to the

thousands of us."

Further west, more than 1,000 students from Manitoba's four universities walked out of classes.

Following a march through downtown Winnipeg, students went to the University of Winnipeg to listen to speakers and bands. Students played a friendly game of street hockey, the prize for which was the "Chretien Cup."

And at the University of Regina, students started the Access 2000 day of action with a pancake breakfast, followed by speeches and activities throughout the day.

Meanwhile, out in British Columbia, the Simon Fraser Student Society's took students through an education maze before busing protestors to downtown Vancouver.

Throughout the morning volunteers were handing out leaflets around campus for the event, while also encouraging stu-

dents to attend the "night of celebration" DJ gig held later in the evening at the Commodore night club.

And on Vancouver Island, more than 1,000 students from the University of Victoria (UVic) and Camosun College gathered in front of the provincial legislature waving placards.

"Let's be fair, the money is there, spend the surplus now," they chanted along with the radical cheerleaders, a group of students who waved pom-poms made out of garbage bags.

Earlier in the day, between 8 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., about 200 students from UVic barricaded entrances to the University campus. In the afternoon, the protest moved from the campus grounds to the legislature.

"I think education should be free and at least more accessible than it is right now," said Kim McKay, a third-year English student at UVic protesting in front of the legislature.

Security or Witch-hunt?

US-initiated terrorist crackdown could mean many things, but doesn't

BY TAL PINCHEVSKY

The year 2000 came and went. In an attempt to avoid the inevitable widespread destruction that was to accompany the new century, people bought lots of canned goods and hid inside their makeshift bunkers, shotguns in tow.

Then we waited, and soon after that, nobody was blown up by terrorists. Despite the barrage of warnings regarding the mass violence that would accompany the turn of the century, nobody blew up.

One month later, this wave of paranoia has yet to break.

Yesterday, Mauritanian police arrested four locals suspected of having links to Islamic guerrilla leader Osama bin Laden. Sources would not disclose the names of the suspects or even the offenses for which they were being held. But security officials did say that the arrests were part of an inquiry into allegations that a Mauritanian named Mohambadou Ould Slahi had plotted attacks against the United States.

Slahi was arrested last week in Mauritania after leaving nearby Senegal. He had previously lived in Canada, and according to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, he fled because of an investigation into an alleged bomb plot that the US linked to bin Laden. Shortly before *The Daily* went to print, the Mauritanian government denied all reports of these convictions.

The overanxious portrayal of bin Laden by Western media as the leader of an alleged international network of evil has led to some overzealous, if not unjustified, action on behalf of certain American politicians. And Canadian immigration policy makers and immigrants have been the ones most burdened by this US policy.

Since the arrest of Slahi and the four other Mauritanians over the past week, not one piece of specific evidence has been released directly linking bin Laden to the alleged bomb plot. Canadian authorities have stated that Slahi left Canada sometime after December 14, when authorities uncovered an alleged plot around the same time that local boy Ahmed Ressam was arrested trying to smuggle bomb-making equipment into the United States.

Ressam, an Algerian-born Montrealer, pleaded innocent last Thursday in a Seattle federal court to charges of planning a terrorist bombing.

LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD

It was the Ressam conviction, as well as an overhyped and under-researched media, that eventually led to what has been described by these same hype machines as a crackdown on violent fundamentalism. The crackdown has happened in two ways: domestically, at the unguarded border that

lies between Canada and the United States, and internationally, in the onslaught of arrests of those allegedly linked to any semblance of a terrorist plot.

On our side of the crackdown, the White House and Congress are planning to deploy nearly 600 new customs and special agents along the US-Canada border. They also are going to significantly increase funding for bomb-detection devices in an attempt to infiltrate and eliminate the so-called Canadian problem of terrorist infiltration.

"Terrorists, and also illegal aliens, alien smugglers, and drug smugglers are increasingly using Canada as a transit country en route to the United States," said Texas congressman Lamar Smith. In response to Smith's allegations, Vermont Governor Howard Dean, someone who has actually visited Canada, has defended current border policies, emphasizing the importance of the open border to the local economy.

The additions to border security late last year transformed the typically swift drive through the border into an exercise in prolonged patience. Around the time

foreigners, including Canadians, entering and leaving the United States. This automated system is scheduled to begin in mid-2001.

Last week, Congressman Smith and his newly established immigration subcommittee heard from terrorism experts from both the United States and Canada. Among those present was Ambassador Raymond Chrétien (Jean's nephew) who made it very clear that the federal government would continue to oppose the stricter controls ingrained in Smith's entry-exit system.

"Let me say that, when it comes to fighting terrorism, our laws are as strict if not more strict than American laws," said the ambassador.

INTERNATIONAL ACTION

The shakedown has extended beyond the Canada-US border. The US has been urging other countries to press harder on people and groups suspected of supporting terrorist activities.

Initially inspired by the incessant paranoia over terrorist plots during the recent millennium hype, it began with the arrest of 13 suspected terrorists in Jordan. In coordination with American law enforcement, Jordanian officials arrested 11 Jordanians, an Iraqi, and an Algerian for planning terrorist attacks after allegedly training with explosives in Afghanistan, where Osama bin Laden is based.

Bin Laden, accused of masterminding bomb attacks on US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in August 1998, is said to be living in Afghanistan under protection from the Taliban. He has been labeled by the US State Department as "one of the most significant financial sponsors of Islamic extremist activities in the world."



Crossing the border could take a while

murder of US nationals outside the United States, conspiracy to murder US nationals outside the United States, and attacks on a federal facility resulting in death.

The US government has gone as far as offering \$5-million for information leading directly to bin Laden's apprehension or conviction. In a recent interview with ABC News' Charles Gibson, the exiled bin Laden stated that while he is not responsible for the bombing of the two US embassies, he did support the bombings and knew some suspects who were charged.

WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

This international crackdown, spearheaded by American interests, has resulted in other convictions surrounded by a variety of inaccuracies and denials. Last week, Jordanian officials sentenced Sheik Abu Qatada, a Palestinian-Jordanian living in England, to life in prison for his alleged involvement in a series of explosions in Jordan. As usual, Qatada is linked somehow to Osama bin Laden as well as the group of 13 arrested in Jordan.

In an interview with ABC News, Qatada stated that the reason for these Jordanian arrests is to "show obedience to the new world order" by attempting to pressure prominent Islamists into giving up information on bin Laden — information that Qatada says he does not possess. Like bin Laden, Qatada denies any participation in terrorist activities, but does not denounce such activities.

British officials have since denied Jordan's request for Qatada's extradition.

McGill Political Science Professor Rex Brynen outlines the inherent difficulties in enforcing these regulations. "There is a thin line between witch-hunting a community and doing the kind of police work one would expect in an investigation of this sort," said Brynen. "The issue then is whether it represents constantly treating Arab-American, Arab-Canadian, or Algerian-Canadian communities with extra suspicion."

Re-enforcing stereotypes has become a prominent issue recently among Montreal's Algerian community. The majority of the community came to Montreal during the

ongoing Algerian civil war. Brynen applauds Canada's immigration policies for allowing the refugees to come.

"The number of people whose lives have been saved by allowing to claim refugee status in Canada far exceeds that of people who died in cross-border terrorism incidents, which is zero right now," said Brynen. "There are a lot of people we didn't deport to Algeria because the civil war was on and there are now complaints as to why these people are allowed to run around Canada. Well, some innocent people would have been killed if they got deported back to Algeria. There are no known dead people at this point from the recent incidents and there are many known people who would be dead if we simply deported every refugee claimant."

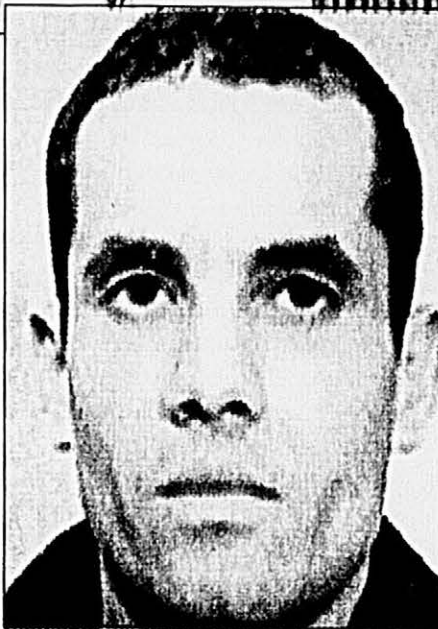
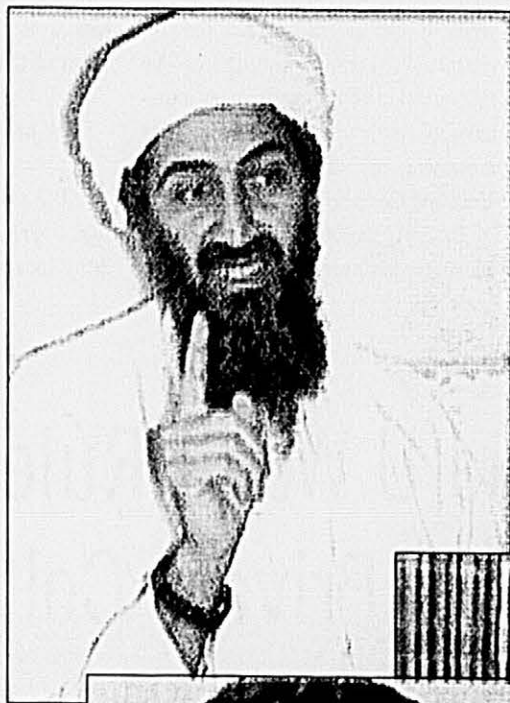
Political Science Professor Hudson Meadwell goes as far as to seriously question the merits of this crackdown.

"I tend to think it's a bit of an overreaction on the part of those people who are waving their hands above it," said Meadwell. "Some of the language is 'Canada is a haven for terrorists.' It seems to me to be an overreaction and my guess would be that it is going to be, to some extent, temporary. This type of move of agents from one border to another is not going to be a permanent change in the landscape of border control in relations between Canada and the United States."

It appears that this overemphasis on the danger of domestic terrorist attacks by Arab fundamentalists conveniently ignores vital aspects of the argument. As a result, it has become apparent that legislators are attempting to quell this new Red Scare.

Brynen provided an example: "We also have to recognize that an awful lot of terrorism in North America is domestically bred. The Oklahoma City bombing was a bunch of American loonies. We have cases of oil facilities blowing up in Alberta and it was Albertans blowing them up. There are all kinds of acts of violence that have nothing to do with immigrant communities."

The full consequences of the escalated anti-terrorism are still unclear. But the opinion among Canadians appears to be that the potential for this escalation by itself represents a regression in North America of relations between nations, groups, and people.



Top left: Osama bin Laden; Left: Ahmed Ressam; Above: Sheik Abu Qatada.

Bin Laden has also been linked to the World Trade Centre bombing, plots to kill President Clinton and the Pope, and attacks on US troops in Saudi Arabia and Somalia. The 17th of 52 sons of Saudi Arabia's wealthiest construction magnate, bin Laden has also bankrolled terrorist training camps in Sudan, the Philippines, and Afghanistan, sending soldiers to fight with fundamentalist Muslim forces in North Africa, Chechnya, Tajikistan, and even Bosnia.

The suspected terrorist is among the US Federal Bureau of Investigation's most wanted fugitives. He has been wanted for

that this beefed up security was introduced, those crossing the border began to complain of being forced to wait for several hours at some locations.

Currently, US Customs has 1,200 inspectors and special agents at 83 points of entry along the US-Canada border, compared with 2,550 along the significantly shorter Mexican border. Ottawa is also trying to kill an American plan for an eventual immigration tracking system that would record all

Who leads McGill publications
in breaking scandalous stories?

THE MCGILL DAILY

Every Monday. Every Thursday.

Sexual Assault Centre of McGill Students' Society

Fire With Water

Call for Submissions

- ❖ Fire with Water is a free, bilingual publication containing prose, poetry, and visual art pertaining to sexual assault
- ❖ Fire with Water acts as a forum for survivors of sexual assault and their supporters
- ❖ All submissions, French or English, are welcome
- ❖ Submissions can be dropped off:
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Africana Congress to Challenge 'Apathetic' Administration

Students organize conference on future of African Studies program

BY MEHREEN KHALFAN

McGill has one of the weakest African Studies departments in Canada, say student organizers of this weekend's Africana Congress 2000.

The Congress will provide a forum for students, academics and citizens to address and discuss this problem, and others, which are faced by African studies programs across the country.

"Growing up in Quebec, and being of African origin, I never really got a chance to study Africa," said Hirut Eyobi, coordinator of the weekend's events. "When I got to McGill, I realized that the African Studies program does not represent what we as a community want, it doesn't represent our vision."

The main objectives of the congress are to address issues confronting the weak African Studies Program at McGill, to spark collective action and interest in the issue, and to hammer out a detailed development plan for the future of the program.

"More than anything, this Congress is about a plan of action, we're tired of fighting the administration," said Eyobi. "This Congress gives us a chance to put our vision to the wider community."

Some of the problems that have plagued the interdisciplinary program in recent years are the lack of an appropriate variety and number of courses dealing with Africa and its diaspora, severe funding cutbacks, and administrative apathy in terms of the regulation of the program.

Also, Congress organizers say that the fact that there is no chair for African Studies leaves the program ill-defined and highly vulnerable to detrimental funding cutbacks and administrative reforms. The lack of any full-time professors of African descent teaching in the program is further indicative of its shortcomings.

"The administration is apathetic, it doesn't care, there's no will to strengthen the African Studies program," said Eyobi. "What we're doing is bringing the will to the university."

Despite the current state of African Studies, McGill was the first Canadian university to offer such a program. The program was originally implemented in 1969 in the context of the Black Power movements of North America, the Civil Rights movement, and the decolonization of Africa and the Caribbean.

In 1994, attempts were made by the administration to reduce the program to

the status of a minor. This was met with substantial student opposition from black students and their organizations on campus.

Most financial support for the Congress has come from organizations such as Canada Heritage and the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, and has been organized primarily by students.

The Congress will offer a number of workshops and panel discussions on various issues, including the challenge of how to expand the African studies program, and make it more relevant to the Black community. Professor Robert Hill, head of the African-American Studies Program at UCLA will give the keynote address. In the last session of the Congress, on Sunday, a manifesto will be adopted which will define the direction that African studies will take in the future. One of the long-term goals of the ASC is to establish an African Studies Research Centre by the year 2010.

With files from Jaime Kirzner-Roberts

*For information on the ASC and the Africana Congress 2000:
<http://anacoana.org/usc>*

Concordia U Won't Rule Out Creating a Private College

BY TRACEY HUOT

MONTREAL (CUP) - Concordia University won't rule out the idea of a private college on campus, as long as Ottawa and the provincial government do not rapidly re-inject money into the education system.

Since taking office in 1993, the federal Liberals have cut more than \$7-billion in provincial transfer payments from health, post-secondary education and training. The response has varied from student strikes to the proposed creation of private colleges.

Administration at McGill University, roughly 10 blocks from Concordia, is currently exploring the idea of creating a private liberal arts program dubbed McGill College International (MCI).

Meanwhile at Concordia, Rector Frederick Lowy is not against the idea of a private college as an ultimate solution.

"[The MCI] proposal reflects the frustration of all the universities as they do not have enough funds," he said. "If we can't get the money from the government, then we'll have to find another way to do it, which is what they [McGill]

are proposing."

Concordia administrators say the objectives of such a venture, which could be dubbed Loyola College International, would be better quality education rather than increased funds.

"The goal here would be to try and provide new options for people at Concordia and to attract new students, locally and internationally," said Bill Bukowski, a Psychology professor. "It would be trying something different and interesting, while raising the profile of Concordia University in Canada and all around the world."

If accepted, the Loyola College International program would aim at attracting exceptional students to Concordia, while providing a unique curriculum as the University tries to respond to the changing global environment.

"It's not a get rich quick scheme," Bukowski said. If anything, he noted the concept of the college would be criticized for costing so much money.

Bukowski also said that steep tuition paid by students at the college would be channelled back into the University in the form of scholarships for other students.

He added that the proposed college should not be considered as an elitist institution, but rather as a college program devoted to diversity and pluralism.

"Quebec is known for not having elite education and for having the best tuition," said Dr. Alan Hochstein, executive director of the MBA program at Concordia. "A privatized college where students have to pay a large cost goes against social values. The richer pay for school and the poor pay taxes, but they are the ones who do not benefit in the end."

This is not the first time there has been discussion about private post-secondary institutions in Canada.

Bette Stephenson, a former Conservative education minister, told a Globe and Mail reporter in November that she had a consortium to establish a private university north of Toronto and had received "totally positive" feedback from the Ontario government.

And on the West Coast, David Strangway, former president of the University of British Columbia, is working on a project to create a private university in Squamish that would charge tuition comparable to private US universities.

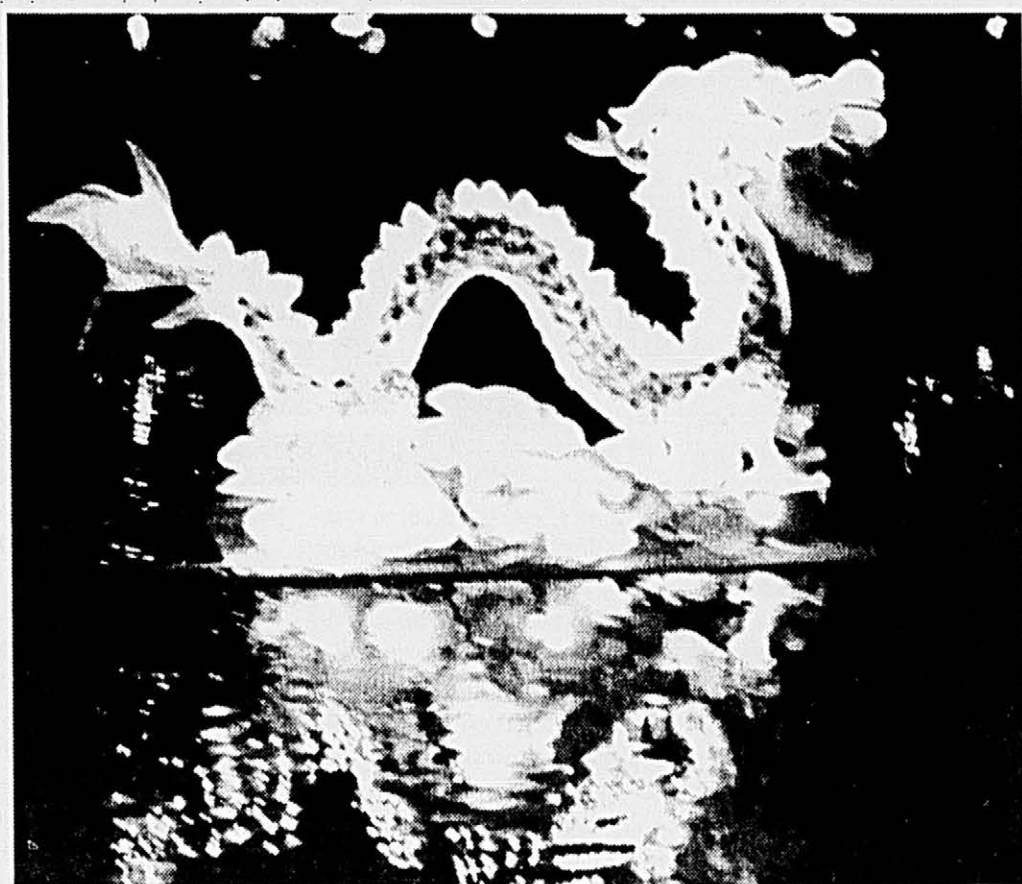
Play of Light

BY MATYLDA GAWOR



Photography is about light: it can be a nightmare and a godsend. The Botanical Gardens displayed the play of light in its exhibition of Japanese lanterns last fall.

I went to the Gardens to discover a new part of Montreal. I snapped these pictures just as they were closing for the evening.



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CULTURE COLUMN

MuchMusic: Canada's Music Television Monopoly

There's a reason why it isn't called the MuchMusic generation

BY JORDAN STEIN

I had half a mind to pen a strongly worded letter of disapproval to singer-songwriter Bryan Adams upon hearing his latest *tour-de-force* on a local radio station that offers a better mix of music – if that's what you call Chantal Kreviazuk on hourly rotation.

The letter was going to offer some intense criticism of the Canadian rock star who once secured an unequivocal place next to such rock leviathans as Rod Stewart and Sting south of the border (refer to *The Three Musketeers* soundtrack). Smashes like "Heaven" and "Summer Of 69" were classic fare and they struck a chord in the United States, the only market that really matters (save Japan for songstress Jennifer Love Hewitt).

But since the release of his greatest hits package, ironically entitled *So Far So Good*, the guy can't seem to write a cross-border hit to save his career, never mind his life. The track he recorded with Sporty Spice (a.k.a. Melanie Chisholm), "Baby,

When You're Gone," is evidence enough. However, the true test of his lack of longevity is his absence from MTV. Because unless you are a performer who records in Nashville, MTV is all that really matters.

MTV Studios is geographically positioned at the crossroads of a world with an



Bryan Adams still has photography to fall back on.

insatiable fascination with everything in entertainment. MuchMusic, having no relation to that pioneering cable station in the United States, is located in downtown Toronto. Sure, they might shoot a lot of movies there, but more often than not Toronto acts as a stand-in for the aforementioned crossroads of the world – New York City.

If you don't have access to MTV – an entirely likely scenario considering the primitive reach of cable in this province – you might be surprised to know that the station has grown from a mom-and-pop cable-access channel, wherein a video jockey sat on a leather couch and introduced a whole bunch of Tiffany videos shot in suburban shopping malls, into a phenomenon that shapes popular culture more than it broadcasts it. If, for example, your latest musical interests include Kid Rock and Limp Bizkit, you have MTV to thank.

MTV has been making a concerted underhanded effort to fizzle out Orlando-manufactured pop in favor of edgier, rap-

rock rollups found in the musical stylings of Kid and Limp. Any industry executive worth his spit will tell you the same. MTV has the power to dictate the hip and the lame through video rotation, guest spots, the MTV Music Awards, and a variety of other masterful techniques.

What began as a station entirely devoted to music videos morphed into today's cultural barometer. Its reach is vast. During Bill Clinton's election campaign, for example, the US president held court on MTV and answered pressing questions from its savvy viewers: "Mr. President, the country is dying to know – boxers or briefs?"

Of course, the cable station didn't always have such monumental importance. It took years of introducing music videos and interviewing their stars before MTV could even begin to cover election campaigns with any level of respectability. But the station evolved. It grew out of its gawky phase and settled into a very comfortable role as the voice for the generation that has become its namesake.

Conversely MuchMusic, like Bryan Adams, seems to have run its course. It has failed to evolve past the cheesy formula of having its video jockeys introduce clips from atop television equipment. In style and in content, the videos have long since surpassed the Canadian station which plays them.

MuchMusic of the year 2000 looks eerily like MTV circa 1984. As for Bryan Adams' place on MTV, he has been relegated to M2, MTV's archive channel for the rehashing of old-school videos that no longer have a place on the up-to-the-minute dictator of pop culture.

The McGill Daily Culture Column welcomes submissions on all topics, from why David Hasselhoff is Satan to the beauty of owning a CD burner. All submissions should be 600 to 800 words in length, and may be edited for length and clarity. Drop off submissions at our office, or email them to mcgilldaily@botmail.com.

Legba steady on two feet

Spoken word is alive and well in Montreal

BY ALEX AILETT

I am not a deep-sea diver. De-compression is not something I think of often. The deeper divers go, the more the pressure traps gas inside them; the longer they stay down, the more it accumulates. If they resurface too quickly the dissolved nitrogen in their blood bubbles through their veins, causing the bends.

This has never worried me. But leaving Legba early last Saturday morning, I began to understand that feeling.

Legba, the sixth show of its kind, was organized and hosted by Kaarla Sundstrom and Alex Boutros, two of Montreal's

strongest voices in spoken-word. It opened with breakdancing by Ellementale-5, and closed with wild percussion and atmospheric cello by Scott Russell and Becky Foon. DJ Mim carried the show on into the morning. In between were 4 hours of hip hop, spoken-word, poetry, song, and dance.

A prejudice has grown around spoken-word because of people who grasp at open mikes to gasp their way through their latest breakdown or breakup. Dance too suffers under the strange banner of an "acquired taste," like mussels or brie. But when either are done well there is no question of acquiring the taste – you just get sucked in. A while back Oscar Wilde said

that it's the audience, and not life, that art really mirrors. If that is the case, we were looking damn fine.

Poet Wayne Compton, visiting from Vancouver, stepped up early on with a series of spoken-word poems relating tales of early black life on the West Coast, "when a black man could get into any club in town, just by going to the back door and saying he was with the band." His treatment of the mobility of culture resonated throughout the rest of the evening. Act after act stepped up to exemplify the diversity, and quality of human talent.

Montreal dancer, choreographer, and singer Mary Ann Lacey presented two pieces. The first, with a surreal bent included herself and two dancers – one dancing from Berlin, and one performing in Santiago de Chile. A voice narrating over the music informed, in English, German, and Spanish, that all three were perfectly synchronized from across the globe – so-called virtual partners. Alyson Vishnovska danced with her in *Marlène à Trois*, a comic piece on love and lust, which showed that the best thing about ties is taking them off. Lacey could make tying her shoes look exquisite. Singer and songwriter Annabelle Chvostek accompanied the piece on guitar, giving a taste of her mellow articulate playing which she later elaborated in a short set.

Spoken performance resumed with poet-performer Nah-ee-lah, and hip hop artists Manchilde and Motion, from Montreal and Toronto. Roger Bonair-

Agard, recent SLAM winner, topped off the evening's feast of words with wit and judiciousness, energetically pronouncing, "As long as there is a sweat shop in Jakarta, there is no difference between Patrick Ewing and O.J. Simpson."

Debbie Young's performance was unforgettable.

Accompanied by Jason Felman on trumpet, she slapped back and forth from drunk to sober, forlorn to flailing. She showered the stage with her drink, and then suddenly calm, her eyes focused imploringly.

Half the time she was a young woman, calling after the memory of Billie Holiday, slow, tender, and crushed with loss. And then with no warning she was Billie: strung out, raving of past glories and defeats, her voice harsh from too much smoke and booze. There was no transition between the two, no faltering of emotion or voice, no pretending. It was so strong that you could only believe.

The man taping the show in front of me ran out of tape halfway through her



piece. It seemed too bad at the time. But on tape – or on paper – the whole night would have been a fraction of itself. To immerse yourself in the energy that flowed between the audience and the stage, to feel the pressure grow as the show went on, you had to be there. That is live entertainment. When you're down deep, the energy stays inside you. It accumulates, until you come up for air. As I left, all I could think about is the dissolved gases in my blood.

Legba will not be back until next year. Watch for the performers around town, there is always something going on.



From Soufflé to Spanish Fly

Award-winning Chem Prof now at your beck and call

BY DARCY SCOTT

"Is it safe for me to lick my balls?" According to Dr. Joe Schwarcz, director of the McGill Office for Chemistry and Society, it probably is.

The above question is one of many that Dr. Schwarcz, one of the professors of the World of Chemistry courses, has answered.

In September of 1999, the McGill Office for Chemistry and Society (OCS) was officially opened with a small ceremony in the Otto Maass building. The office is designed to answer the scientific queries of students and members of the public.

The goal throughout much of Dr. Schwarcz's career has been to educate both students and the public on matters of chemistry that apply to everyday life. When the OCS was launched, Dr. Schwarcz already hosted a weekly live broadcast radio phone-in show on CJAD. He also writes a weekly column in *The Gazette* and a bimonthly science feature for the *Washington Post*. He has a regular program on the Discovery Channel, and has recently published a book entitled *Radar, Hula Hoops, and Playful Pigs*.

As for the question regarding balls, it turns out that the inquiry was related to the

safety of licking golf balls. The gentleman was concerned about the pesticide and fungicide used at most golf courses.

Dr. Schwarcz is rarely fazed by the bizarre nature of questions. When one woman had fears about the safety of kissing dead bodies at an open casket funeral, he assured her that while nothing is guaranteed, most funeral homes do an excellent job of cleansing the bodies.

Given the reactions of shudder and disgust that many chemistry students face when they mention their major it would seem that most people think that chemistry, and dealing with chemicals, are fates worse than death. Dr. Schwarcz would love to dispel the myths which add to this negative image.

One of his recent concerns is the massive amount of information that we are bombarded with through the media. Often this information has been twisted in some way or changed, allowing for incorrect inferences. In one instance, he was speaking on the radio about food dyes and mentioned the use of cochineal red. Cochineal red, he said, is a dye that is extracted from a small bug, about the size of a cockroach. This dye is often used in strawberry and cherry ice creams. A few days later a woman called to ask if it was true that there were cockroaches in chocolate ice

cream. The connection is obvious, but the information was clearly misunderstood. Schwarcz aim is to be a crusader of knowledge in the sea of misinformation. He treats every question with respect, no matter how absurd it may sound. The strangest question he ever received was, "Where do you go to have an autopsy on a goldfish?" To the questioner's dismay, there is no such place.

Many of his stories and anecdotes have been collected in his recent book *Radar, Hula Hoops and Playful Pigs*. The book is a compilation of 67 short essays about



Dr. Schwarcz - Up in smoke

interesting science and chemistry. The majority of the material comes from his *Gazette* column, so anyone who is a regular reader will recognize many of them. The essays are quite enjoyable and it is easy to start recounting them as your own. There is certainly no other place where you can learn about the connection between Santa's flying reindeer and the magic mushrooms that grow in Lapland. He answers many of the questions about "old wives' tales" that science has explored, from the cold-fighting benefits of chicken soup to the validity of the fish as brain food claim. (Both, by the way, appear to have some scientific merit.) There are stories about the potentially poisonous nature of soufflé and the effectiveness of Spanish Fly love potion.

His writing style is enjoyable, and all of the essays are short enough that they can be easily read during a quick study break. His book is a better source of cocktail party facts than of answers to exam questions, but is nonetheless enjoyable and entertaining.

Opening the OCS has brought Dr. Schwarcz to McGill on a full-time basis. When asked about the response to the office he said it had been overwhelming,

both from students and from the general public. As if on cue, an elderly gentleman walked into the office and said that he had recently purchased a dishwasher and was wondering why his silverware was beginning to look tarnished. Dr. Schwarcz kindly explained that the oxidizing power of dishwasher detergents is much greater than that of regular soap, thus the surface of the silverware had been oxidized. He recommended that the gentleman refrain from placing his good silverware in the dishwasher, or he would have to polish them each time. The old man thanked him, tipped his hat and left. It appears that he is doing a great service to students and the community.

Whether or not McGill students have noticed him, Schwarcz has become very well known. He can no longer walk through an airport without being noticed. Last year he was the first non-American to win the American Chemical Society Grady-Stack award for Interpreting Chemistry for the Public. His book is a Canadian best-seller, and he is regularly in demand as a guest speaker. If you have a question, and it seems even vaguely scientific, there is a good chance Dr. Schwarcz can help you out.

THE ART DUMMY

Brain Candy for Montreal

Kids In The Hall grace Théâtre St-Denis

BY JOHN ORTVED

I hope the Kids In The Hall die. Yes, I hope they die tomorrow. That way, the several hundred comedy aficionados who attended Sunday night's show can sit back and relax, knowing for all of eternity that we got to see something truly spectacular that could never be topped. Because they remain so stubbornly alive, I am currently debating jumping on a plane to New York, just in case that show is any better, or even just as good.

How dare you judge me, like we all don't lust for elitism. It was a beautiful thing. I haven't used that word and meant it in a long time, but there is something about Scott Thompson dressed in a full length dress and blonde wig that I can only describe as beautiful. It is probably nostalgia, more likely hilarity, but something in the Theatre St. Denis struck a chord with me the other night and I am left without the capacity for cynical criticism, or even an inappropriate conceit; it was simply beautiful.

They have gained weight. And Dave Foley's hair looks silly. Yet these are just the miniature pieces of glass crushed up into your mashed potatoes; they could never ruin your Thanksgiving dinner. The Kids In The Hall are displaying talents so rare in Hollywood that Jim Belushi would saw off his left leg to attain them (now there's an idea for a movie). To step onto a live stage with a troupe you have not performed with for four years and to come off as copasthetic and hilarious as you were four years ago on television



The Kids in The Hall; Scott Thompson, Bruce McCulloch, David Foley, Kevin McDonald, Mark McKinney

demonstrates skill that sitcom comedians can only dream of.

With the exception of Jerry Seinfeld, no comedian has made this transition so easily or successfully. The Kids were as crisp and funny as they ever were on TV. No effects or retakes and they didn't miss a beat. Scott Thompson and Kevin McDonald even threw in some ad lib as icing on top of our giant birthday cupcake of fun. These guys are geniuses and their performance was flawless.

Maybe it was because they were in Montreal. The city is home to any comedian worth his salt and with the exception of Toronto, this is probably as friendly and accommodating an audience as they are going to get in Canada. In my time, I've seen some great things come out of Toronto: The Maple Leafs, Maestro, me, but Hogown's proudest achievement (next to our loose enforcement of prostitution) has to be The Kids In The Hall. They set a new standard in sketch come-

dy. They proved that guys could be funny wearing women's clothes, without that being the joke. They made crude jokes about homosexuality, race issues, Americans and Canadians. Taboo was nonexistent. They were on CBC. They were allowed to say fuck. Nothing was sacred, not gays, not the Queen of England, not even Hitler having a private moment with a donkey. They ripped on everybody and they did it really well.

Then they made a movie. If you

haven't seen Brain Candy, it is worth the time you spend forging a signature and inventing an address on the registration forms at your local video store. It got panned, but you're not going to find good cancer humour in any Bob Saget or Charles Grodin movie, trust me, I've tried. So go with The Kids. My point is this: aside from the consistently funny Farrelly Brothers, Jerry Seinfeld and Homer Simpson, good comedy today is less than ubiquitous. It is rare and hard to find. The Kids In The Hall have progressed from cutting edge and revolutionary, to consistently hilarious. They've jumped from bad boys in drag to patron saints in the church of bawdy humour. Now they are providing us with an opportunity to see how good comedy can really be. This is it folks. This is as good as it gets.

If you missed out, pray. If the powers that be see what I've seen, we will all be seeing more of The Kids. If fate decides to give us a prostate exam (in a bizarre twist of fate, maybe Scott leaves the troupe to direct *Barenaked Ladies* videos and drive drunk with Jason Priestley), know this; The Kids In The Hall were, and are once again, one of the most original and funniest comedic artists the world has to offer. They performed live last night and proved themselves to anyone who ever had any doubts.

Good comedy is hard to find. *Friends* is lame and Jim Carrey's gone serious. The richest gravy train in all of contemporary comedy rolled through town last weekend, I hope you caught a ride.

Urban Cuban – When Electronic Meets Traditional

Integrating drum n' bass beats with a traditional Cuban sound

PHOTO AND REVIEW BY PIERRE-ALAIN PARFOND

Mano Negra's soul is back with the release of *Urban Cuban*, an album by the group P18, which is lead by former Mano Negra member Thomas Darnal. The new band's name comes from "Patchanka," the studio located in Paris's 18th arrondissement where La Mano Negra used to record.

There are officially 10 members in P18, but 30 musicians worked for two years on this album and the results are both tight and soulful: *Urban Cuban* offers very diversified, high quality music. I mean diversified in that it's a mix of elec-

tronic and drum-and-bass-style patterns adapted to Cuban rhythms, melodies, and instruments. Because of this, the album was "kind of a puzzle to realize," said Darnal. The styles are quite opposite and furthermore P18 manages to include typical Cuban songs that are incredibly well arranged, plus English and French lyrics, Mano Negra style.

The more you listen to this album, the more you'll love it. The album is a whole - it's like a story, developing from one song to another, with its highs and lows and accelerations and chill moments. All this ends with a beautiful poem in French dedicated to all those who decide to pack up and travel the world.



Thomas Darnal during his Montreal stop early last week

Feasts of Fury

LE PITA PIT
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BY BEN ERRETT

Aliteration can be a wonderful rhetorical device. However, the sound of the words rolling off your tongue and the actual meaning they convey aren't always going to work for you, which is the first problem with the Pita Pit. As appealing as the concept of eating in a pit can be, it is apparent that this name wouldn't have been chosen if the restaurant served empanadas.

Though the restaurant is actually sunken, I'd hesitate to call it a pit. Situated

right next to Dunkin' Donuts and Subway with a connection to La Cité, the Pit seems perfectly situated to rake in the student bucks. However the formula they've got now probably won't do it for them.

As we walked into the Pit, we were confronted by huge paintings of frightened cartoon meats and vegetables. These really aren't cute - I found the giant olive staring down at me while I ate kind of disconcerting. It gets even weirder in the back of the restaurant, where giant toilet paper rolls with faces leer at you from the walls.

Coming in from the cold, I asked for the soup of the day. I was told that they had decided not to sell soup. So we chose to go directly for the main event.

I ordered a turkey pita while my friend had the club, both for \$4.75. I considered

Pita Pit Is, Um, the Pits

You'd be better off at Subway, or at home



The Pita Pit

the salad but the server advised me that it was just iceberg lettuce from the toppings bar. He didn't seem to think too highly of it, so I passed.

Things looked promising as the cook took meats out of the fridge and slapped them on the grill. But the meat in question was standard deli cold cuts. It seemed a bit strange to cook cold cuts, what with the name and all.

We were also disappointed when our server reached for the pita. Instead of fresh baked bread, he pulled two pitas out of a plastic bag - the same brand available across the street at Metro. The toppings were adequate, ranging from shredded iceberg lettuce to cucumbers to olives, with hummus and tzatziki thrown in as well. The server wasn't wearing plastic gloves,

something I didn't take note of until he reached into my pita to stuff the toppings down.

We took our food to one of the five little tables in the small restaurant. That's when it became apparent that this idea was not designed for Montreal: the lack of a double door sent a gust of frigid air through the resto every time someone came in or out. We ended up eating with our coats on.

The food was decent but not very surprising. There was nothing about it that couldn't have been replicated at home. At least with Subway you get fresh baked bread and a warm restaurant. Being a new restaurant, the Pita Pit may yet shape up. Until it does you're best off making pita sandwiches at home.

Concert Review

BY DAVID PODGORSKI

It's not every day that a McGill production sells out at the box office, and rarer still that one can expect Quebec premier Lucien Bouchard to attend, yet such was the case last weekend. *Les Contes de Hoffmann*, the latest production from the McGill Opera Workshop, achieved these rare feats in addition to generating much critical acclaim in what can only be described as a rare success for the McGill community.

The music of *Les Contes de Hoffmann* was a creation of the French composer Jacques Offenbach, and based on several of

the short stories of E.T.A. Hoffmann. Hoffmann is probably best remembered for creating that most saccharine and indefatigable of Christmas favorites, *The Nutcracker*, yet this opera highlights a somewhat darker side of the eccentric storyteller. *The Sandman*, *Councillor Crespel*, and *The Lost Reflection in the Mirror* are all tales of the fantastic, yet every one of them ends in tragedy.

Aaron Estes starred as the hapless Hoffmann (in an alternating cast), employed by the librettists as the protagonist in his own stories. A skilled actor and a talented singer, Estes's performance was a solid one, yet was somewhat overshadowed

by his supporting cast. Cassandre Prévost delighted the audience with several virtuosic solos as Olympia, the mechanical doll with whom the writer falls in love. Another act which found much favour with opera goers was the comic relief provided by Jake Feldman in several roles. Feldman seems to have a natural inclination towards comedy - the unintentional hilarity he created by throwing his cane into the orchestra pit was a gaffe which had the audience in stitches.

No story - or opera - is complete without a villain, of course, and there were several commanding performances to be found over the course of the evening. The main

advantage of three plotlines is that one can provide a multitude of antagonists, and McGill's music faculty is fortunate enough to have a reservoir of talent as far as evil-sounding baritones are concerned.

Two singers in particular who distinguished themselves were Jonathan Carle and Stefan Fehr. Fehr gave a superb performance as Coppélius, the eccentric optometrist while Carle was wonderful as the malicious Doctor Miracle, (although the role seemed curiously inspired by the character Cypher from *The Matrix*.)

The McGill Music Faculty has consistently produced first-rate opera for many

years, and last week's run was no exception. Besides the soloists, there was also an orchestra of gifted musicians, who played capably under the skilled baton of Tania Miller. The set design and costumes were similarly professional, but what made this opera truly enjoyable was the acting. Without superstar tenors and prima donnas dominating the stage, the singers had to rely on such fundamentals as stage presence and the delivery of lines. The result was great theatre which gave the audience a drama to follow as well as a concert, and *Les Contes de Hoffmann* managed to marry story and song perfectly.

daily classifieds

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CD REVIEWS



We Are The Streets
Lox
(Universal)

Pop quiz, hip-hop heads: Name all the rap groups that have sustained a decent career after a major change in image. Well, it's a trick question - such groups don't exist. Success and artistic diversity are rarely used in the same sentence in hip hop, in fact most often they are a paradox (Kool Keith can tell you all about that). What's much more common to encounter is the "appeal-to-suburban-youth-and-we'll-ink-you-a-nice-advance" factor, a.k.a. the sell-out.

The pathology of the Lox's demise is clear and predictable. Strike number one: The Lox affiliate themselves with Puff Daddy - bad move. Puff may know how to sell records but he also knows how to pimp artists. Strike number two: Biggie dies. With the headliner gone, the Lox find themselves swimming in an ocean of mediocrity, and drowning. Strike number three: 1998's *Money, Power & Respect* - the Lox's first album, which didn't get

them money, power, or respect.

Looking back at their erroneous ways, the Lox have attempted to right their wrongs by severing ties with Bad Boy Entertainment and Puff. Destination? The current most popular camp, the Ruff Ryder label. Their new album, *We Are The Streets*, is an obvious attempt to replace the "if you think I'm jiggy" image with the "if you think I'm jiggy I'm gonna bust yo ass" one.

The results are mixed at best. Although Jadakiss's charisma shines through, Styles and Sheek sounds generic. If these guys are trying to move on, why are they using the same rhyme schemes that they've been using ever since "The Benjamins?" Sorry, Lox, but the style is old and tried.

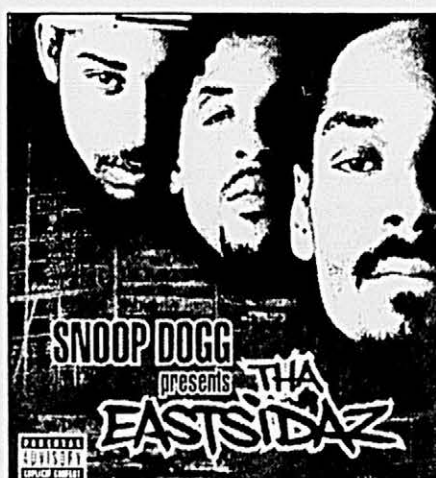
The beats on *We Are The Streets* are decent, though not extraordinary. That is, of course, with the exception of the Premier track (who once again proves that it is impossible to go wrong when Primo laces the beat). The rest of the album is primarily produced by Swizz Beatz, the 20-year-old phenomenon who serves up the majority of Ruff Ryder anthems.

I once heard the Lox call themselves the underground kings (referring to their lengthy mixtape career before signing on to Bad Boy). However, with their new-found emancipation, the only thing they share with the underground is their beef with Puffy. Their recent independence also gives them no one to blame for their lack of success.

I guess Casual was referring to the Lox when he said, "Red light, slow that shit down, bring it to a halt...you're wack and

it's all your fault." That's what happens when you sell your soul.

-Joe Lacuna



**Snoop Dogg Presents
Tha Eastsidaz
(Universal)**

For those of you who were worried about Snoop Doggy Dogg's status as a player in the hip-hop game, have no fear, Snoop is still here. Not only is Snoop a rapper, songwriter, and actor, but he has also added "record executive" to his repertoire. With the new title and responsibility, Snoop also has a new name: Big Snoop Dogg. *Snoop Dogg Presents Tha Eastsidaz* represents the first release from his brand new record label, Dogghouse Records.

Tha Eastsidaz consists of relative unknowns Goldie Loc and Tray Deee and of course, Big Snoop Dogg, whose name and face are featured prominently on the album cover. It also features guest rappers Dr. Dre, Nate Dogg, Battlecat, Butch Cassidy, and Xzibit. Along with executive

producing and rapping on the album, this is Snoop's "first foray as mentor," according to *Tha Eastsidaz* bio. As one can plainly hear, Snoop's influence is all over this album, in fact *Tha Eastsidaz* sounds like a Snoop album. Snoop not only brings his laid back, flowing style to *Tha Eastsidaz*, but he also brings the Long Beach sound that made him and Dr. Dre famous. The album is a mixture of contemporary (Snoop's attempt at the Swiss Beats style popularized by DMX, "Got Beef") and old school ("Take it Back To '85"), all with the Snoop flavour.

Snoop says, "Once you listen to the songs we got, I mean there's some really deep songs here." But the lyrics are pretty standard Snoop fare: smoking weed, bitches, representing Long Beach and the East side, gangsters, etc. Yawn.

As a first release from Dogghouse Records, this is just what one might expect. Snoop is showing that he still knows where he came from. He could always craft good party songs, and the case is no different on *Tha Eastsidaz*. The only problem is that the hip-hop game has changed, and Snoop's style is getting a little boring.

What Snoop needs to do to be a serious record exec is find some rappers with actual talent, not just let his friends get behind the mic. If Snoop can find some real groundbreakers then he truly deserves to be called "Big" Snoop Dogg. Until then he's still a puppy in the record business.

-Josh Kirshenblatt

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Hilarity and Wit Defined

Mask On!'s flawless comedy, Mask One!, is achingly funny and smart.

BY SARI LONG

Four women, wearing masks, telling their stories through therapy sessions — *Mask One!* is a whimsical and altogether incredible piece of comic theatre that should not be missed.

Brilliant monologues and character development tie together the various themes in this play. The premise: four individuals, all seeking to find and define themselves in the world, hide behind both actual and metaphorical masks. There's Emily Blackery (played by Anana Rydvald), the demented clown-wannabe with serious intellectual delusions, the angst and rage-ridden Ani DiFranco-ish Cris (played by Holly O'Brien), the timid and ignored Jane Stanley (Amy Sobol), "...that's Stanley, S-T-A-N-L-E-Y", and the pampered, spoiled and lonely wife of an out-of-town executive, Priscilla (Kori Gulotta).

All of these women present their innermost thoughts and feelings individually, never interacting but instead relying on psychiatrist sessions, a tape recorder, a diary and mirror talks to vent their frustrations. With child-like emotional outbursts and honesty, the players explore the battlefields of life, navigating through trials and tribulations, each reaching a satisfyingly happy ending.

Though all four actors are exceptionally talented and endearing, the standout is the glowing Anana Rydvald. Her lanky and acrobatically tuned figure coupled with an amazing array of convincing regional accents kept my eyes glued to the stage, transfixed with every gesture

and mime-inspired antic. She plays the off-kilter, unconventional Emily Blackery, a Russian-accented clown who dreams of changing the world through deep poetic street performances. Enhanced by blaring Depeche Mode music, Rydvald keeps the laughter flow-

ing as she admonishes her psychiatrist to "be quiet—sheesh!", scares children away with her frantic balloon animal creations and gets kicked off her sidewalk station for disturbing café goers. Rydvald, known as Banana the Clown in professional circles, said that her mother,

an "eccentric" artist living in Hawaii, is her inspiration. Rydvald also added that her childhood antics of mimicking her mother's Russian accent developed her talent for impersonation.

The theater company itself, *Mask On!*, was developed by the four women, who all graduated from the John Abbott College's professional theater program. According to Rydvald, the women "didn't like each other" while in school, yet are now extremely close as their all-female company has taken shape. They also wrote, directed and starred in their performance of *Mask One!*. The company has also put on a play called *Tripping Through Oz*, but that time, there were boys in the cast too.

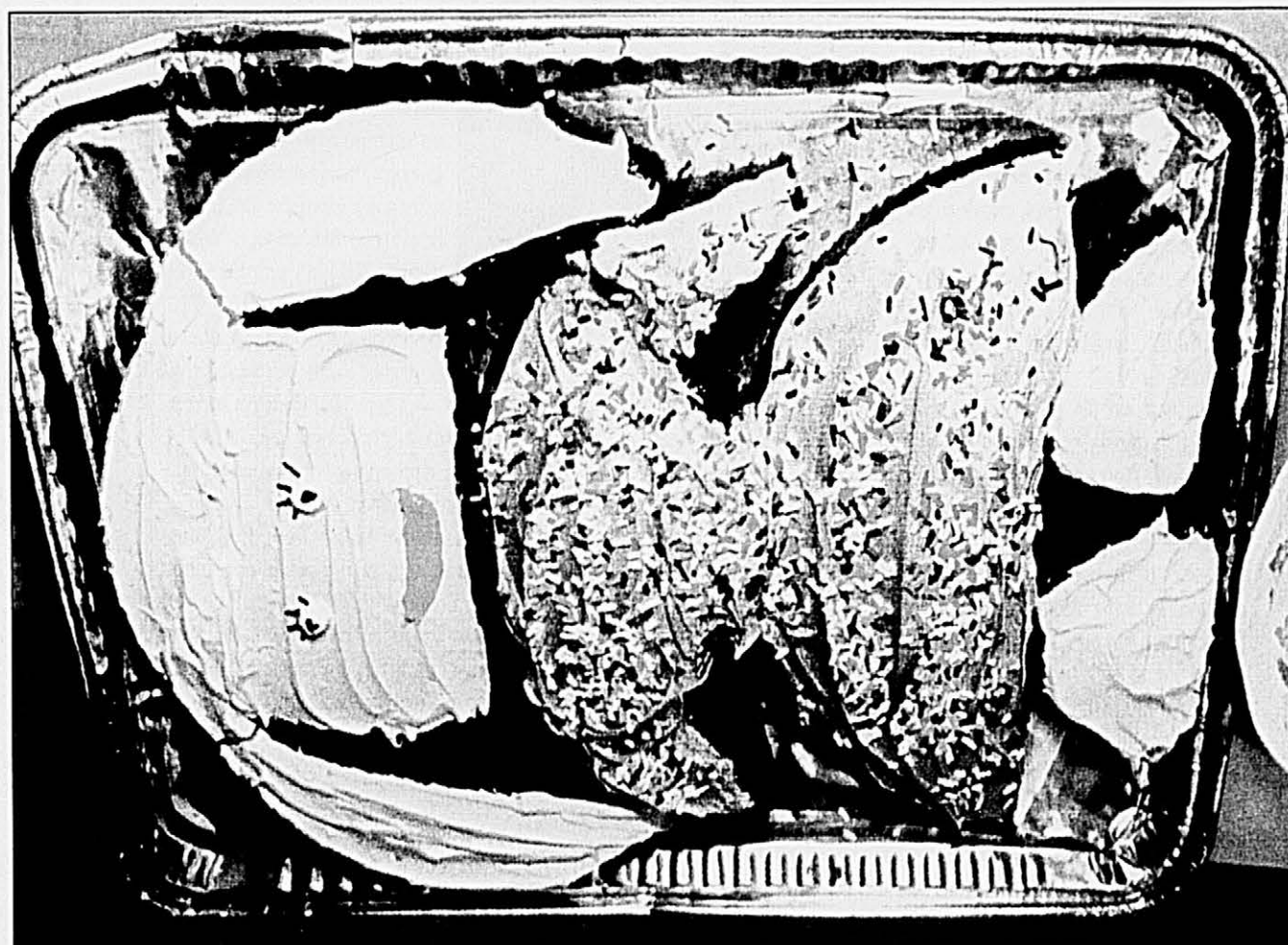
Mask One! is a light comedy in a refreshing style, making it a great piece of delicious theater. It already has had success with audiences, taking the 1999 Montreal Fringe Festival by storm last year. Head to infinitheater (a unique venue, itself something to check out) and prepare to laugh.

Mask One! will be performed Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. in the infinitheater. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at the box office at Blizzarts Bar, 3956A St. Laurent. Call 987-1774 for information.



The Mask On! theatre company

OFF THE DARKROOM FLOOR



Celine Heinbockel

Edible Woman cake made for the Margaret Atwood Seminar in the English Department